



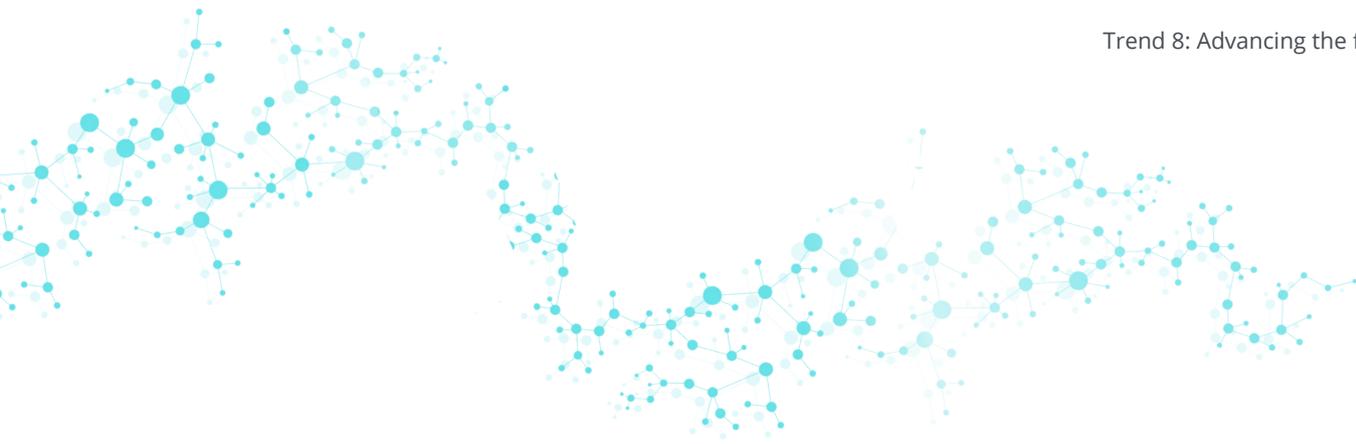
## **TREND 8**

# Advancing the future of work

## **REDEFINING LEADERSHIP AND ADAPTING THE WORKPLACE CULTURE**

*Janine Nel, partner, Consulting, Deloitte Canada*

*Eamonn Treacy, director, Consulting, Deloitte Canada*



WHILE MINING COMPANIES have been considering for several years how digital transformation might alter the future of work, COVID-19 has accelerated this imperative. Many companies are taking this opportunity to review work routines, evaluate remote work, and even outsource key areas. However, to truly enable the future of work and build trust with their talent, organizations should focus on the role of leadership and culture in the new environment.

While the conversation around digital transformation and the future of work has been continuing for some time, COVID-19 has caused a significant change in how many organizations approach and manage their operations. This has created an opportunity for miners to streamline the adoption of digital technologies and capabilities in line with the significant increase in remote working. There is a window of opportunity to accelerate digital transformation and advance the future of work. Never before have technologies and new ways of work been adopted as quickly. As we transition through the current crisis and move from responding to recovering and ultimately thriving in the “new normal,” mining leaders have an opportunity to avoid falling back into conventional ways of working. Instead, they can chart a new path and embed recent changes sustainably by re-architecting work, adapting the mining workplace culture, and creating elevated workforce experiences.

Charting this new path and embedding change sustainably requires mining leaders to craft the business models of tomorrow, challenge their conventional definition of productivity, embed a culture of trust, replace command-and-control management with empowered collaboration, and manage the cultural and engagement issues associated with long-term remote working.

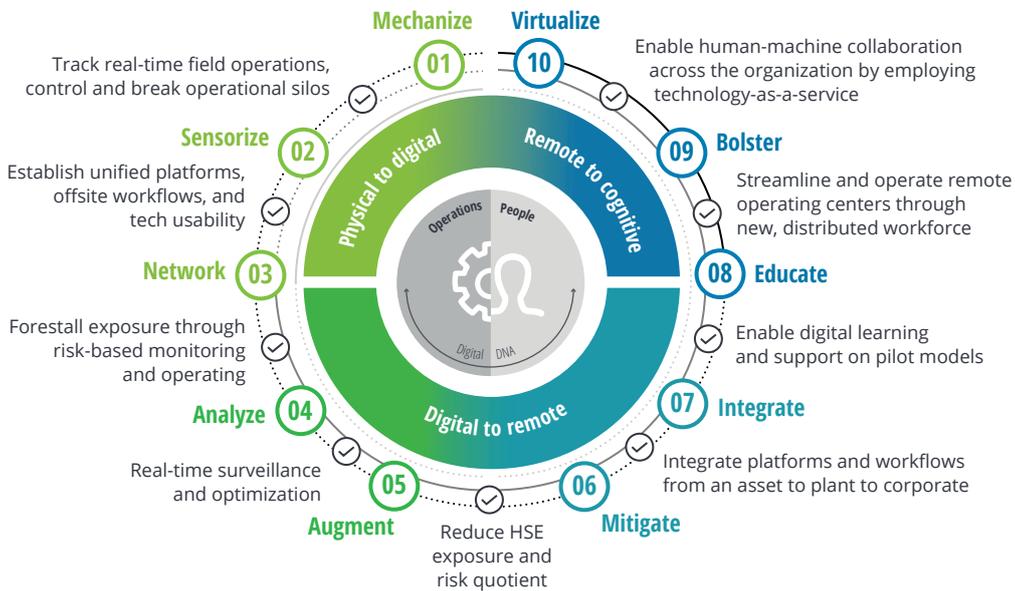
*There is a window of opportunity to accelerate digital transformation and advance the future of work.*

In recent years, mining companies have adopted a growing range of digital solutions. Many have mechanized their operations, moved from the physical to the digital realm by adding equipment sensors, and adopted unified networks to transmit data. Despite this progress, in many ways these steps are only a beginning. The true power of digital transformation lies in a structured road map that extends changes from an individual asset level to the entire organization, to create a platform for innovation and collaboration—ultimately ensuring that digital transformation goes beyond replacing workers and instead augments the workforce and collaborates with it (figure 1).

FIGURE 1

## Digital road map powered by human-machine collaboration

☑ Business objective    ⌋ Primary focus    ⌋ Peripheral focus (asset, system, corporate)



Source: Duane Dickson et al., *The future of work in oil, gas, and chemicals*, Deloitte Insights, October 5, 2020.

By bringing together data from on-field physical assets and enabling off-field remote and virtual access, mining companies can improve their abilities to analyze real-time information; augment their digital capacities; and create platforms to integrate their data, analytics, and workflows.

visibility into their operations needed to focus on driving system-level thinking and performance. Doing this, however, often requires not only technology but also a change of leadership style and the creation of a supporting culture.

*In recent years, mining companies have adopted a growing range of digital solutions.*

Enhanced digitization and remote support of work activities offer an opportunity to take a more integrated view of assets, business units, and the organization as a whole. For the first time, many organizations have the breadth and depth of

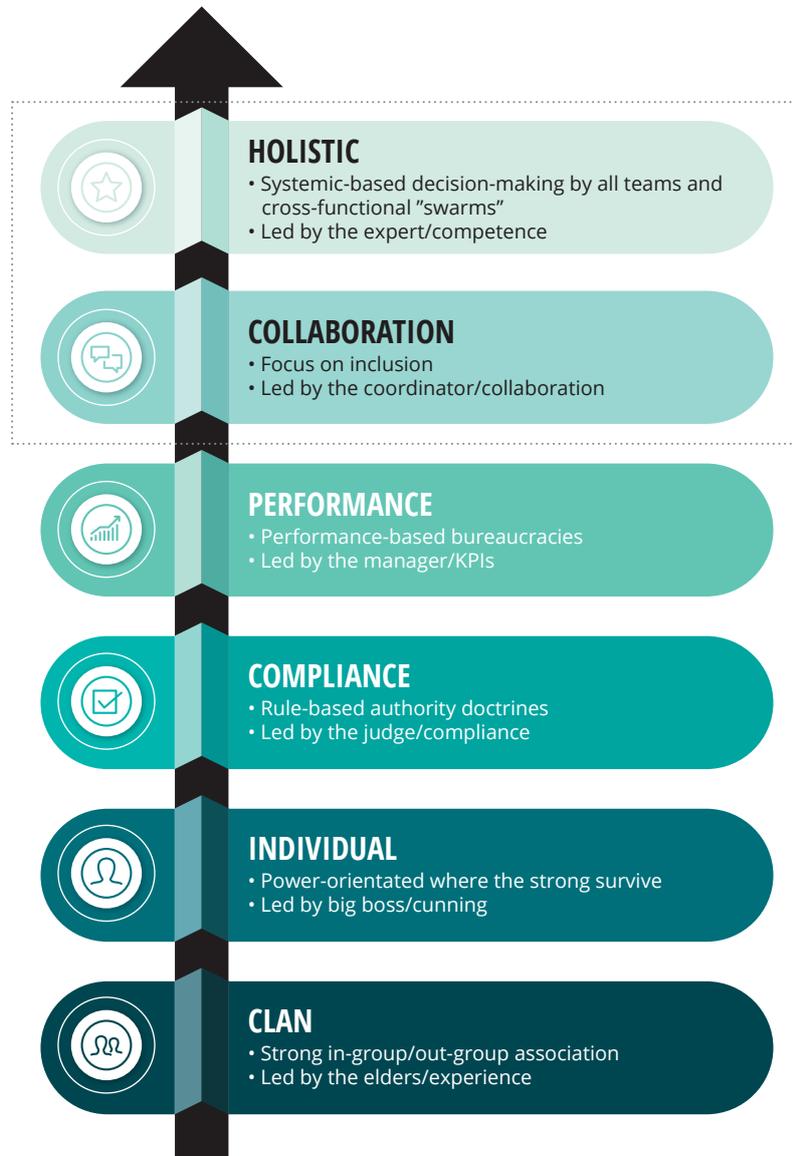
## Enabling transformation through leadership and culture

To transition to a more integrated way of working, leadership should drive the evolution of the organization's value system from being primarily compliance- and performance-based to encompass collaborative and systems-driven capabilities. This can be a critical challenge as research demonstrates that only about 10% of people automatically work in this way. Leaders should create an environment in which their teams can think differently about the work they do while still ensuring that the focus on performance and compliance doesn't waver (figure 2).

FIGURE 2

## Evolutionary value system

Leaders should support holistic and collaborative values



Source: Clare W. Graves, "Levels of existence: An open system theory of values," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 10, no. 2 (1970): pp. 131–55.

Being able to tackle the more ambiguous and complex opportunities associated with adopting collaborative and holistic value systems also typically requires a change in leadership approach. Although providing positive support to the team will always remain a key part of effective leadership behavior, enabling integrated problem-solving requires additional leadership capabilities. In the wake of COVID-19, the need for resilient digital

leadership has possibly never been more relevant. Digital leadership can be described as providing vision and purpose, creating conditions to experiment, empowering people to think differently, getting people to collaborate across boundaries, and creating a culture of distributed leadership.<sup>1</sup> Resilient leadership can be described as designing for the heart and the head, putting the mission first, aiming for speed over elegance,

owning the narrative, and embracing the long view.<sup>2</sup> Resilient digital leadership for mining executives generally involves:

- A strong sense of self-awareness, increasing leaders' ability to identify their own biases and limitations (including the unconscious bias for conventional, tried-and-tested ways of working).
- The ability to take a balanced view, relying on data.
- A human-centric, outcomes-based approach to mining (e.g., designing mining organizations, processes, shifts, and teams with the outcome in mind but from a human-centered, meaningful, and safety-first perspective).
- Transparency in relationships within the organization.
- A strong moral perspective that allows the team to trust that the leader is consistently focused on making the best decision for the team and the system as a whole.
- Actively creating a culture of distributed leadership by pushing decision-making to lower levels through integrated data analytics.
- Leading the way in creating elevated and curated experiences for the full workforce ecosystem (e.g., from corporate functions to core operations, from full-time permanent staff to contract workers).
- An inclusive leadership approach characterized by the traits of cognizance, commitment, curiosity, cultural intelligence, collaboration, and courage, which allows leaders to have inclusive mindsets, habits, and experiences in the workplace that drive employee diversity and authenticity for the organization as a whole.

However, leadership is only part of the solution. Culture should be seen as a continuing process of acting on ideas that helps teams try and fail and, most importantly, learn to be flexible in an

increasingly complex networked environment. Adapting the workplace culture requires leaders to understand and optimize the environment in which work gets done, maximizing workers' potential and focusing on inspiring rather than controlling them. As mining organizations grapple with the need to reconfigure the way work is done, it can become increasingly difficult to integrate old ways of working with the new. With a shift toward cross-functional, networked teams, organizations have to operate as they do currently and start to work in new ways, to innovate into the future. Sustaining cultural connectivity often becomes increasingly complex in this bimodal state where new ways of operating (concurrently driving productivity and optimizing cost) call for a move from reactive crisis management to proactive problem-solving and human-centered, as opposed to production-driven, mining.

To foster, develop, and sustain the right organizational culture, mining companies should:

- Establish resilient, digital leadership that leverages technology to curate experiences to elevate and better engage the workforce.
- Lead with courage and decisiveness, prioritizing speed over elegance in a rapidly evolving world of work.
- Champion a culture of innovation for sustainable mining.
- Diversify their talent-sourcing methods, thereby diversifying the potential pool of talent as well as the hiring pipeline.
- Increase women and minority representation across functions and in corporate offices, while extending opportunities for support and mentoring.
- Challenge entrenched organizational attitudes, practices, and systemic processes, such as clock watching and viewing flexible work as a "perk," etc.

- Cultivate a relationship of trust, respect, and open communication, and ensure there are clearly defined deliverables and touchpoints to maintain productivity and morale.
- Challenge entrenched behaviors and talent practices to create an inclusive environment where employees bring their authentic selves to the workplace, to form a higher performing, better engaged, and productive workforce.
- Consider empowering the workforce to have input into re-architecting the work (e.g., how and where work gets done) as well as how to maintain optimal collaboration across physically dispersed teams.
- Proactively leverage evolving collaboration tools and technologies for effective digital workforce engagement, teaming, collaboration, and culture enablement.

As progressive mining companies seek to embrace proactive problem-solving and human-centered mining, many are starting to select candidates who exhibit the behaviors needed to enable this systemic and holistic thinking. This can mean candidates with different skill sets and behaviors to those generally found in the traditional mining environment. These changes include, for example, a respect for competence above experience, which represents a significant change from many conventional operations, where experience is often favored.

With the shift away from experience and toward competence, we see other new beliefs and behaviors, such as the use of factual-based thinking systems, flexible problem-solving skills, and an overarching perspective that starts with “trust” as the default position.

This challenges many of the aspects of conventional thinking, which often focuses on a perspective that “there’s only one way to do the job,” or that the only

way forward is either with 100% consensus or by following the most powerful representative of the group.

“Of course, one of the challenges with targeting for these sorts of cultural outcomes is reaching a broad enough talent pool to give yourself a really good chance to get there,” says Janine Nel, partner, Consulting, Deloitte Canada. “People who have grown up in the mining industry are more likely to exhibit the ‘conventional’ behaviors that they have been trained into.”

To combat this, many organizations are now spending their time thinking about the skills required and how they are analogous to those required in other industries. Naturally, for professional roles the options are more limited, but for the majority of front-line workers, there are lots of potential options, especially now that so many of these roles are or can be delivered remotely. For example, many of the key roles and activities in mine dispatch are essentially the same as emergency services dispatch. In the case of one organization, the pay rates were much higher for mining dispatchers. This provided access to a much wider pool of skillful applicants, experienced in shift work, who saw a transition into mining as an opportunity. Taking this alternative approach significantly widened the available applicant pool and improved the culture and professionalism of the dispatch teams. Organizations are increasingly thinking much more broadly and analogously about the skills necessary to deliver the work required by the workforce of the future.

Culture requires continuous development. As miners push the levers for transformation set out above, the leadership and culture dimensions can become fundamental to success. Mining is a talent-starved industry; these shifts in leadership and culture are key to retaining and building trust with the current and future talent that mining companies will rely on.

## Re-architect work, redefine leadership, and adapt culture for the future

- **Optimize the opportunity COVID-19 has created to rethink business and operating models.** Rethink the modality of work based on the outcomes to be achieved. Let the work outcomes and modality of work guide decisions relating to operating model design. Embrace the possibility of decentralizing work, letting go of control and challenging the status quo in terms of the mining workplace of the future.
- **Challenge the work outcomes that you seek to achieve.** Move beyond production targets and identify the value generators for the mine (e.g., the type of value the mine needs to deliver to stakeholders, employees, and communities). Identify the work outcomes that will generate the required value, and design the operating model around these outcomes.
- **Assess systems thinking and behaviors in the organization.** Challenge leaders to let go of control and embrace systems thinking, and challenge employees to step up and engage in integrated, data-driven decision-making.
- **Identify “adjacent roles” and consider a recruitment approach to maximize diversity and cultural change.** Focus on the work outcomes, identify the required skills and capabilities to deliver these outcomes, and rethink the composition of roles to deliver on the outcomes—and don’t be surprised if these roles do not take the form of traditional mining roles.
- **Conduct an assessment of the value systems exhibited by leaders.** Establish a baseline and develop a plan to actively target the development of collaborative problem-solving approaches for distributed leadership.

## ENDNOTES

1. Gerald C. Kane et al., *Coming of age digitally: Learning, leadership, and legacy*, MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte Insights, June 2018.
2. Punit Renjen, *The heart of resilient leadership: Responding to COVID-19*, Deloitte Insights, 2020.

# Tracking the trends 2021

Closing the trust deficit

**TREND 1**  
**Building resilience amid volatility**  
Scenarios for strategic leaders

**TREND 2**  
**M&A in an altered world**  
Winning back investor trust

**TREND 3**  
**ESG: Getting serious about decarbonization**  
From strategy to execution

**TREND 4**  
**E.G: Working to overcome the social trust deficit**  
Linking social investments to sustainable outcomes

**TREND 5**  
**ESG: Corporate governance adding to competitive advantage**  
Emerging risks mandate greater oversight

**TREND 6**  
**Creating an agile supply chain**  
Overcoming the vulnerabilities exposed by global shocks

**TREND 7**  
**The path towards integrated operations**  
Positioning miners to pivot in the face of change

**TREND 8**  
**Advancing the future of work**  
Redefining leadership and adapting the workplace culture

**TREND 9**  
**On the road to zero harm**  
Creating the next generation of integrated predictive safety systems

**TREND 10**  
**Meeting demand for green and critical minerals**  
Mining's role in the transition to a clean energy future